

Saving the Giraffes



Part One

Imagine a group of giraffes living on a small island in the middle of a lake. It is raining heavily, and the water in the lake is rising quickly. In fact, their island may soon disappear. They are simply not able to swim to land. There are too many hungry crocodiles in the lake, all waiting to get a taste of giraffe for lunch.

- 5 This is what happened to nine Rothschild giraffes in September 2020 on a small island in western Kenya. The giraffes were all an endangered species¹ and someone had to save them by getting them straight to land.

The local people had a plan. They built a special raft² to move the giraffes, one by one, to a sanctuary³ across the lake. An adult male giraffe is approximately 6 meters tall and weighs about 1,500 kilograms.

- 10 That's why, although it was only a short distance away, the raft had to be very strong and have very high sides.

The next part of the rescue was difficult to carry out. Somehow the people had to convince the giraffes to go onto the raft. "They are afraid of us and won't allow us to touch them," explained one of the workers. "They don't understand that we want to help them." They tried putting mangoes and other foods in the

- 15 raft, but that didn't go well either.

In the end, the workers decided to try a different strategy. First of all, they gave the giraffes medicine to make them sleepy. Then, the team put ropes around the giraffes' shoulders so that

20 they were able to guide them easily onto the raft. Finally, the team had to cover the giraffes' eyes so that they would not be afraid as they were getting onto the raft.



¹endangered species / מין בסכנת הכחדה / صنف في خطر الانقراض

²raft / ספינה / طوف

³sanctuary / מקלט / ملجأ, مأوى

104

Part Two

The rescue operation took about five months to complete and it was a great success. The giraffes quickly adapted to their new home. "This operation has given me much joy," says Mary Nelson, who works as a volunteer at the sanctuary. "There are

5 so few Rothschilds left in the wild and we have to do everything we can to protect them."

- 10 And the numbers don't lie. According to the latest reports, there are, at present, less than 2,500 Rothschild giraffes in the world. "Let's hope that their numbers go up soon," says Mary. "We all want these beautiful animals to live in the wild for many more years to come."



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Answer the questions for the part/s you read.

Part One

1. What problem is mentioned in lines 1-4?
2. What or who caused the problem in lines 1-4?
 - a. the crocodiles
 - b. the heavy rains
 - c. the local people
 - d. the giraffes
3. Name one thing that we learn about the Rothschild giraffes in paragraph 2.
4. Why did the locals build a raft with high sides?
5. Complete the sentence.
The team used mangoes and other foods in order to
6. What did the rescue team do to the giraffes after they were sleepy? Give one example.

Part Two

7. Who is Mary Nelson? How does she feel about the rescue?
8. Complete the sentence.
Mary hopes that ...